

Workers in Mexico, US voice support for Will Lehman after death threat by UAW official

Our reporters
26 July 2026

Support continues to grow among workers in the US, Mexico and internationally for Will Lehman, the Mack Trucks worker and socialist candidate for United Auto Workers (UAW) president, following the death threat made against him by an UAW International staff member. UAW Region 9 Organizer Raymond Jensen Jr. posted an AI-generated image depicting Lehman bloodied and menaced by a masked gunman on the candidate's public Facebook page. Neither UAW President Shawn Fain nor any other UAW International Executive Board members have repudiated Jensen's threat.

But the attempt at intimidation has backfired, provoking an outpouring of solidarity from workers who see in Lehman's campaign their own struggle against the pro-corporate UAW bureaucracy. Particularly significant are the statements from Mexico, where workers labor for the same global corporations that exploit workers north of the border. One Mexican worker wrote:

From Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, I send greetings to Will Lehman, who is an example of the struggle from within the belly of American capitalism. There are powerful signs in the nauseating image of Raymond—despite the action the UAW henchman tries to portray—blood flows from Will, blood that is human vitality, the red of the working class struggle, which those who need to hide their faces try to intimidate, imposing their blurred presence through murderous weapons as the thug behind the AI image.

Despite the narrative the enemies of the working class try to turn into tradition, they have no way out of their own labyrinth of abuse and corruption, Trump-style, in the style of that elite defeated by its own message, lacking human intelligence and overflowing with impotence. I hope, as a worker here in Lagos de Moreno, Will, that your effort for the UAW presidency succeeds, though beyond winning an election so contradictory in a system stacked against the workers of Mack Trucks, you've already won, Will—your working class consciousness has already earned you your place in correcting that fog-shrouded history that has

darkened the United States of America. Far from a Scorsese gangster film—your story and legacy, Will, is the reality of the working class, and neither all of Hollywood nor such use of artificial intelligence will ever be enough to defeat a path walked by the working class following your steps. Thank you, and keep up the fight, Will.

A worker at the General Motors' assembly complex in Silao, Guanajuato added:

From this side in Mexico, Will Lehman has our moral support—the support of the people who believe in him as a new leader. Don't let your guard down. We know full well that if he's received these kinds of threats, it's because he's leading well and bringing good democratic ideas to the autoworkers' unions, whether nationally in the United States or inviting us to participate internationally. I believe he's doing good work, and that's why he's receiving this kind of intimidation or threats, and it will not stop there. He should be very careful. He's held in high regard, even though I don't know him personally. He's someone who fights for the rights of others without expecting anything in return, beyond wages and working conditions that help a worker live a more dignified life. That speaks very well of him. We workers in Mexico send a big hug to him and to everyone.

Statements have also been sent from across the United States. A railway worker said:

Jensen attacking and threatening Will is a typical response by these union "leadership" types. They advance far enough and they become politicians with nothing in common with the workers they are supposed to represent. Will's campaign threatens their positions,

and like a scared rat they bare their teeth. The union is the workers, not the sellout leadership. Jensen threatening a member tells everything the workers need to know about the UAW leadership. “Shut up and send us your dues money so we can go back to playing golf with management.”

A worker from Hawaii wrote:

The power of a voice should never be underestimated. When a worker’s concerns are dismissed, mocked, or minimized—even through something as simple as an AI-generated image portraying a worker beaten with a rifle pointed behind him—it is an attempt to diminish that person’s message rather than address the issues being raised. The effect can be to discourage others from speaking out.

History has repeatedly shown that attempts to silence a voice rarely succeed. More often, they inspire others to speak out. Throughout history, progress has come because ordinary people refused to remain silent in the face of injustice. When one voice is ignored, many more often rise to take its place.

The voices of working people deserve to be heard, not ridiculed or threatened. Respect is earned through honest dialogue, accountability, and a willingness to listen—even when the message is difficult to hear. Attempts to silence Will Lehman’s voice do not make the concerns disappear—they inspire others to speak louder, stand together, and ensure that those concerns cannot be ignored.

A member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 3, a veteran of the 2017-22 Charter/Spectrum strike in New York City, wrote:

The situation with US and Canadian autoworkers is madness. The workers once again are getting shafted. We need a man like Lehman to finally put an end to the corrupt leadership of Shawn Fain. Raymond Jensen is one of Fain’s cronies making sick death threats. If this leadership is kept, it is guaranteed they will try to break the rank and file like Spectrum did to The Time Warner Cable workers in NYC. You will lose everything. I lost my livelihood 24 years and had to start from the bottom again with almost 2,000 others at 54 yrs old because of weak corrupt union leadership. Spectrum paid off the Union to a sum of 200+ million to drop a lawsuit that we filed against the company that we were winning. We

need new leadership in UAW to get rid of these corrupt clowns and stand with the rank and file and Will Lehman who will bring back integrity, higher wages and decency to the workers. Fain, Dickerson and Jensen know their time is up and are running scared. Let’s get rid of Fain and send the corrupt union officials packing!

These statements, particularly from workers in Mexico, are a devastating answer to the economic nationalism of the UAW apparatus, which for decades has blamed Mexican and other workers for the destruction of jobs carried out by the global corporations with the UAW’s signature on the contracts. Its trade white paper, “Trade and the American Dream,” and Shawn Fain’s embrace of Trump’s tariffs line the union up behind trade war and imperialist war, pitting workers against one another in a race to the bottom.

Lehman’s campaign is based on the opposite principle: that workers in the US, Mexico and Canada confront the same transnational corporations and can defend themselves only through a common struggle. He calls for the abolition of the UAW bureaucracy and the transfer of power to rank-and-file workers, organized in democratically controlled committees linked internationally through the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC). None of the official candidates—neither Fain, under federal criminal investigation over his abuse of power and purges of his internal rivals, nor Rich Boyer and Margaret Mock—offers anything but a fight for control of the same nationalist, corporatist machine.

The death threat is a measure of the apparatus’s fear. But the response of Lehman and his supporters has been to double down on their fight to expose and abolish the UAW apparatus. This fight is winning support from Jalisco, Guanajuato and Windsor, Canada to Detroit, Louisville and Honolulu.



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